

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Abe et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,903,294. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Abe et al. fails to disclose an ink cartridge with a first cover for covering a first surface with an ink filling hole and a pressure reduction hole formed in the first cover as recited in Applicant's claim 1. Applicant's claimed invention is thus advantageous because both a filling apparatus and a pressure reduction apparatus can be brought close together to the cartridge package, ink filling is rendered easy and the operation of applying seals to the case opening is made simple (page 3, line 14 - page 4, line 5 of Applicant's specification).

Abe et al. teaches an ink cartridge with a main shell 3 comprising a first storage chamber 5 which contains a negative pressure generation member 6 and an air vent 8 for allowing the atmospheric air to reach the negative pressure generation member 6 and an ink delivery port 7 through which the ink is supplied to an inkjet recording head 1. The ink cartridge also has a partition wall 4 with a micropassage 11 which is disposed to connect the second storage chamber 9 to the first storage chamber 5. Furthermore, the ink is ejected into the second storage member 9 through an ink ejection port 10 of the cover member 12.

As shown in Fig. 1A of Abe et al., the air vent 8 is located on a first surface of the main shell 3 and the ink ejection portion 10 is located on a second surface of the cover member 3. It is neither taught nor disclosed in Abe et al. to provide both the air vent 8 and the ink ejection portion 10 on the same surface. Also, as stated on page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserts the top wall of Abe et al.'s cartridge (i.e., the main shell 3) is the same as Applicant's first cover. However, it is neither taught nor disclosed in Abe et al. to position either the air vent 8 or the ink ejection portion 10 on the top wall of the main shell 3. Abe et al. thus suffers from the disadvantages of Applicant's described related art because the ink ejection port 10 and the air vent 8 are located on mutually opposite sides of the case. It is respectfully requested the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1 and 46-68 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further would be desirable to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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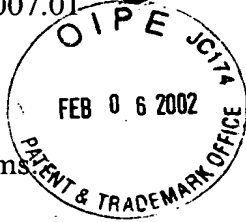
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Attachment:
Appendix

Date: February 6, 2002

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<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
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APPENDIX

Changes to Claims:

Claims 46-68 are added. ✓

The following is a marked-up version of the amended claim:

1. (Amended) An ink cartridge ~~removably attached to a recording head for~~ holding ink ~~supplied to the recording head~~, comprising:
 - a case having a first surface on the outside of the case and a second surface on the outside of the case in mutual opposition, the first surface being open;
 - a first cover for covering the first surface;
 - a partitioning wall for separating the interior of the case into a first chamber and a second chamber, respectively, for holding the ink;
 - a porous material accommodated in the first chamber;
 - an ink filling hole formed in the first cover for filling the first chamber and the second chamber with ink; and
 - a pressure reduction hole formed in the first cover ~~and connected to a reduced pressure source~~ for reducing the pressure in the first chamber and the second chamber, wherein the first chamber and the second chamber are connected near the second surface inside the case.